ORCHID CLASSICS

COLOURISE

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS | BERKELEY | WARLOCK

London Choral Sinfonia
Michael Waldron, *conductor*
Roderick Williams, *baritone*
Andrew Staples, *tenor*
Elena Urioste, *violin*

COLOURISE

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Five Mystical Songs*
Baritone: Roderick Williams

1	I	Easter	5.07
2	II	I Got Me Flowers	3.01
3	III	Love Bade Me Welcome	5.36
4	IV	The Call	2.00
5	V	Antiphon	3.13

Lennox Berkeley (1903-1989)

6		Variations on a Hymn by Orlando Gibbons, Op.35**	18.52

Tenor: Andrew Staples

Peter Warlock (1894-1930)
Capriol Suite

7	I	Basse-Danse	1.23
8	II	Pavane	1.49
9	III	Tordion	1.02
10	IV	Bransles	1.57
11	V	Pieds-en-l'air	2.58
12	VI	Mattachins (Sword Dance)	1.07

Ralph Vaughan Williams

13	The Lark Ascending	15.54

Violin: Elena Urioste
Arranged by Paul Drayton

Total time **63.57**

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*World Premiere Recording: version for strings and piano
**World Premiere Recording

The catalyst for this disc came with the chance discovery of a vocal score of Berkeley's *Variations on a Hymn by Orlando Gibbons*. Not ever having heard of the piece, I saw the forces it is scored for and thought it fit rather well the remit of the LCS. A little research soon revealed that the piece had never been recorded, nor was there anything of a performance history either. I could tell there was a piece of real merit and substance here, and it most definitely deserved an outing. All this coincided with the arrival of the pandemic and subsequent lockdown. Planning live performances was impossible but working towards a recording further down the line seemed doable. January 2021 came and we – like so many others – had to cancel the planned recording. By January 2022, the project finally happened. I would like to add my personal thanks to the Lennox Berkeley Society, who have been so helpful and supportive since my very first email to them, not to mention patient as the pandemic forced recording plans to keep being postponed.

Berkeley was not unique in looking to the past for inspiration. Knowing that his *Gibbons Variations* would require string orchestra, I immediately thought that Warlock's *Capriol Suite* might provide a suitable companion on this album. I have fond memories of playing the piano duet version alongside my sister as children. Perhaps unfairly relegated to the realms of school orchestras and amateur groups, the *Capriol Suite* is a real tour de force and has a surprisingly sparse catalogue of high-level recordings. It is technicolour in each movement's effects, whilst remaining authentic to the medieval inspiration at its core. The final movement – *Mattachins* – forever reminds me of the end of Ravel's *La Valse* (written six years earlier) as the poise and grace of everything before gradually descends into chaos and self-destruction.

The *5 Mystical Songs* of Vaughan Williams need little introduction, and their earlier George Herbert texts provide a continued rhythm alongside the Berkeley and Warlock. I had always thought the songs existed in two versions; one being

a full, large-scale orchestrated version and the other being a keyboard reduction of said orchestration for piano and/or organ. The obvious practical implications of both versions put heavy parameters around the number of singers, size of venue etc. Despite their huge popularity, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that a version existed for string orchestra and piano (with the chorus and baritone solo parts the same as other versions), created by the composer himself. I was not aware this version existed, and the publisher confirmed that it had never been recorded in this arrangement before. I believe these pieces are Vaughan Williams at his absolute best, and whilst the music does not itself need 'discovering', I hope this chamber-orchestra version sheds a new light on it. I also hope this version may provide new opportunities for performances from groups of all shapes and sizes, who may want to perform these pieces with forces larger than just a keyboard instrument, but without the huge resources of the version for symphony orchestra.

Michael Waldron

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Five Mystical Songs, arr. for strings and piano (1906-1911)

I Easter

II I Got Me Flowers

III Love Bade Me Welcome

IV The Call

V Antiphon

Throughout much of Vaughan Williams' output there runs a clear visionary or mystical vein that is rarely so openly identified as in his settings of four poems (the first, *Easter*, split between the two opening songs) to texts from the 1633 collection *The Temple* by the Anglican priest and metaphysical poet George Herbert (1593-1633), who was himself an amateur musician.

The composer – who once described himself as 'a cheerful agnostic' – set these for baritone soloist with four different versions of the accompaniment: for piano; for wind ensemble; for (optional) chorus and orchestra – the one heard at the premiere, given at Worcester Cathedral at the 1911 Three Choirs Festival when it was conducted by the composer; and (as heard here) for piano and strings.

In the songs, there is a characteristic Vaughan Williams combination of restrained passion and reflection, clear in the maestoso opening of *Easter*, with the solo vocal line marked largamente, but also in *The Call*; entirely typical, too, are the moments of harmonic ambiguity.

Another characteristic – the use of modality, is equally prominent, particularly in *I Got Me Flowers* and *Love Bade Me Welcome*, whose perfect word setting arises from its combination of expressivity and utter simplicity. Towards the close, Vaughan Williams quotes the opening phrases of the ancient Gregorian chant *O sacrum convivium*, which celebrates the Eucharist, as the song, which began in a modal E minor, moves into the major.

The words of *Antiphon* will be widely familiar from its use as the hymn 'Let all the World in Every Corner Sing,' but Vaughan Williams' setting has a particularly stirring, almost windswept quality.

Lennox Berkeley (1903-1987)
Variations on a Hymn by Orlando Gibbons, Op.35 (1951)

Robert Bridges, who was Poet Laureate from 1913 until his death in 1930, was also interested in hymnology. In collaboration with musician Harry Ellis Wooldridge, he published in 1899 the *Yattendon Hymnal*, named after the village where he lived – Yattendon in Berkshire. Aimed at replacing with better material some of the Victorian tunes which Bridges believed were unsuited to the religious task at hand, it proved to be an influential volume: Percy Dearmer

and Ralph Vaughan Williams took note of it when compiling their own *English Hymnal*, published in 1906.

No.35 in the Yattendon volume is 'My Lord, my Life, my Love', a hymn written by the Congregationalist minister Isaak Watts (1674-1748) adapted by Bridges himself and set to a noble melody by the Elizabethan composer Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625); it was from the Yattendon source that Lennox Berkeley took the tune by Gibbons used in his Variations.

In turn, the tune had come from George Wither's published collection *The Hymnes and Songs of the Church* (1623), where it appears merely as treble and bass lines and sets the words of an earlier hymn, 'Lord I will sing to thee / for thou displeased wast'.

Unveiled at the fifth Aldeburgh Festival on June 21, 1952, Berkeley's variations were first performed by tenor Peter Pears, organist Ralph Downes and the Aldeburgh Festival Choir and Orchestra under the composer.

Following their first meeting in Barcelona in 1936, Britten and the ten-years-older Berkeley became close, and even lived together for a time at the Old Mill at Snape. Berkeley, indeed, seems to have been in love with Britten. But whatever their relationship, the departure of Britten and Pears to America in 1939 appeared to mark its end.

Following their return in 1942, however, there was a gradual rapprochement. In 1946 Berkeley married Freda Bernstein in what proved to be a permanent and happy union. Several later Berkeley works were either commissioned by Britten or premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival – including this composition. For whatever reason, however, the first performance was sufficiently substandard for Britten to feel obliged afterwards to write to Berkeley in half-congratulatory, half-apologetic mode:

'a great deal came across -- & a great deal of enjoyment was felt by many people I have talked to. Thank you so much for writing such a lovely piece for us. Apart from the pleasure, it was a great honour for the little Aldeburgh Festival to have a new piece from your pen … it is so lovely for us to have all these musical expressions of your connection with & feelings for Suffolk.'

Gibbons' tune is heard right at beginning played by string quartet – a reference, to the viol consorts for which Gibbons himself composed so effectively. Thereafter, and incorporating his own quiet spiritual intensity partly through a use of at times pungent harmony and both varied textures and metres, Berkeley derives the different sections of his work (including solo segments for the tenor and the organ) from elements of Gibbons' original in a way that is both highly effective and highly expressive.

Peter Warlock (1894-1930)
Capriol Suite (1926)

I Basse-Danse
II Pavane
III Tordion
IV Bransles
V Pieds-en-l'air
VI Mattachins (Sword Dance)

During the course of his sadly short and often impecunious musical career, Peter Warlock (real name Philip Heseltine) tried various means to keep financially afloat. Unusual for his time, his interest in early music led to him editing much of it from extant sources.

At the invitation of dance expert Cyril W. Beaumont (who himself edited the volume), he also provided the preface to a new English-language edition of

the 1589 volume *Orchésographie* by Thoinot Arbeau (1520-95: real name Johan Tabouret). The text of the original book – in translation: *A treatise in dialogue form, through which anyone can easily learn to practise the honest exercise of dancing* -- consists of a dialogue between Arbeau and Capriol – a lawyer (in modern French, 'cabrioler' means to caper or cavort).

In the course of this work Warlock became familiar with the original dances contained therein, making his own, free arrangements of six of them to form the *Capriol Suite*, initially for piano duet but subsequently arranged for string orchestra and even for full orchestra: in a rare appearance on the concert platform, Warlock conducted the suite at the Proms in 1929, when it was a definite success: he was recalled four times. He dedicated the score to the composer Paul Ladmirault.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
The Lark Ascending (1914-1921),
arr. Paul Drayton for violin and mixed choir (2018)

Quintessentially English was the terrain covered in *The Lark Ascending*, composed in 1914 for violin and piano but revised shortly before its premiere in 1920, when it was performed by violinist Marie Hall and pianist Geoffrey Mendham. The best-known version, for violin and orchestra, dates from the following year – and there have since been many more arrangements made for all manner of forces.

This justly celebrated example of Vaughan Williams's art is a perfect musical representation of a still summer's day in the English countryside, with the lark (originally violin) taking flight above 'till lost on his aerial wings in light,' as George Meredith described it in the poem that inspired the piece.

Commissioned by the Swedish Radio Choir and conductor Simon Phipps and premiered by them in 2019, Paul Drayton's arrangement preserves the solo

violin part intact and adapts Meredith's poem to the notes of the original accompaniment in the central section.

© George Hall

London Choral Sinfonia

The London Choral Sinfonia was formed for a concert in the chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 2008. Since then, the LCS has secured a reputation as one of the highest-regarded and critically acclaimed chamber choir and orchestral ensembles, performing a broad repertoire throughout the season. A busy performance schedule throughout the year sees the group appearing at venues including Cadogan Hall, St Paul's Cathedral, Kings Place and St John's Smith Square.

Aside from championing many of the major cornerstones of the repertoire, the LCS seeks to champion new music, having premiered new works and recordings with numerous composers including Tarik O'Regan, Owain Park, Richard Pantcheff and Ian Assersohn. Recent premieres include former Composer-in-Residence Oliver Rudland's *Christmas Truce*, with a libretto by Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy.

Performance highlights include Bach *Jauchzet Gott* with Katherine Watson (soprano) and Crispian Steele-Perkins (trumpet), Bach Motets and Cello Suites with Guy Johnston (cello), Mozart *Requiem* with Duncan Rock (bass), Mozart *Exsultate Jubilate* with Mary Bevan (soprano), Britten *St Nicolas* with Nick Pritchard (tenor), and Brahms *Ein Deutsches* Requiem with Matthew Brook (baritone).

Michael Waldron

Conductor

Michael Waldron began his musical training as a chorister at St Ambrose College, Hale Barns. After a gap year Organ Scholarship at Worcester Cathedral, he held the Organ Scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, for four years. Here he studied under Stephen Layton, during which time he was involved with the Choir's numerous international tours, concerts, broadcasts and recordings.

Since graduating, Michael has quickly established himself as one of the most dynamic and versatile conductors of his generation, enjoying a busy concert career. He has worked with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Hamburg Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Polyphony, London Mozart Players and Tonbridge Philharmonic, including appearances at the Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Cadogan Hall, Wigmore Hall and BBC Proms.

Michael enjoys an extensive operatic career, including shows and projects for the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Buxton International Festival, Iford Opera, Opera Della Luna and West Green Opera.

He is currently Artistic Director of the London Choral Sinfonia, London Lyric Opera, Islington Choral Society, Epworth Choir, and has also held posts with Guildford Choral Society and University of West London Chamber Choir.

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Roderick Williams

Baritone

Roderick Williams is one of the most sought-after baritones of his generation with a wide repertoire spanning baroque to contemporary which he performs in opera, concert and recital.

He enjoys relationships with all the major UK opera houses and has sung opera world premières by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michel van der Aa, Robert Saxton and Alexander Knaifel as well as performing major roles including Papageno, Don Alfonso, Onegin and Billy Budd.

He performs regularly with leading conductors and orchestras throughout the UK, Europe, North America and Australia, and his many festival appearances include the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Aldeburgh and Melbourne.

As a composer he has had works premièred at Wigmore Hall, the Barbican, the Purcell Room and on national radio. In December 2016 he won the prize for Best Choral Composition at the British Composer Awards.

Roderick Williams was awarded an OBE in June 2017 and was nominated for Outstanding Achievement in Opera in both the 2018 Olivier Awards for his performance in the title role of the Royal Opera House production of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* and in 2019 for his role in ENO's production of Britten's *War Requiem*. He is Artist in Residence with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra from 2020/21 for two years.

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Andrew Staples

Tenor

Andrew Staples' creative output includes concert and opera singing, directing opera and other stage works, music film-making and photography. To these complementary disciplines, he brings a collaborative approach and a strong desire to tell better stories, that build connections between artists and audiences.

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Elena Urioste

Violin

Elena Urioste is a musician, yogi, writer, and entrepreneur, and is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School. As a violinist, Elena has given acclaimed performances as soloist with major orchestras throughout the world, including the Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Minnesota Orchestras; the New York, Los Angeles, and Buffalo Philharmonics; the Boston Pops; the Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, National, Atlanta, Baltimore, and Detroit Symphony Orchestras; the London Philharmonic, Hallé, Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Malaysia Philharmonic, and Chineke! Orchestras; and the BBC Symphony, Philharmonic, Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and National Orchestra of Wales. She has performed regularly as a featured soloist in Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium and has given recitals at Wigmore Hall, Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Kennedy Center, Konzerthaus Berlin, Sage Gateshead, Bayerischer Rundfunk Munich, and Mondavi Center. Elena is a former BBC New Generation Artist.

Elena is the founder and Artistic Director of Chamber Music by the Sea, an annual festival on Maryland's Eastern Shore. She has been a featured artist at the Marlboro, Ravinia, La Jolla, IMS Prussia Cove, Cheltenham, Bridgehampton, Moab, and Sarasota Music Festivals, and appears regularly in recital with pianist Tom Poster. Elena is co- director of Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective.

Elena has been practicing yoga for over a decade and received her RYT-200 hour certification from the Kripalu Center. She is the co-founder of Intermission, a program that combines music, movement, and mindfulness, aiming to make music-making a healthier, more holistic practice for students and professionals alike through yoga and meditation.

www.elenaurioste.com

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
5 Mystical Songs

Text: George Herbert (1593-1633)

I Easter

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him may'st rise;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more, Just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The cross taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or since all music is but three parts vied,
And multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

II I Got Me Flowers

I got me flowers to strew thy way;
I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sun arising in the East,
Though he give light, and the East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we miss:
There is but one, and that one ever.

III Love Bade Me Welcome

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lack'd anything.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:
Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My dear, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.

IV The Call

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, My Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joys in love.

V Antiphon

Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King!

The heavens are not too high,
His praise may thither fly:
The earth is not too low,
His praises there may grow.

Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King!

The church with Psalms must shout.
No door can keep them out:
But above all, the heart
Must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King!

Lennox Berkeley (1903-1989)

Variations on a Hymn by Orlando Gibbons, Op.35

Text: from the Yattendon Hymnal, based on Isaak Watts

My Lord, my Life, my Love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove:
Thou are my joy[1], my all.

My only sun to cheer
The darkness where I dwell[2];
The best and only true delight
My song[3] hath found to tell.

To thee in very heaven
The Angels owe their bliss;
To thee the Saints, whom thou hast called
Where perfect pleasure is.

And how shall man, thy child,
Without thee happy be,
Who hath no comfort nor desire
In all the world but thee?

Return my Love, my Life,
Thy grace hath won my heart;
If thou forgive, if thou return,
I will no more depart.

[1] life
[2] of my night
[3] soul

Ralph Vaughan Williams
The Lark Ascending
Text: George Meredith (1828-1909) (abridged)

He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.

For singing till his heaven fills,
'T is love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup,
And he the wine which overflows.

Till lost on his aërial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.

Violin I
Jamie Campbell (leader)
Ellie Consta
Charlie MacClure
Gillon Cameron
Charlotte Reid
Hazel Correa
Robin Martin
Anna De Bruin

Violin II
Allesandro Ruisi
Sophie Mather
Laurie Chan
Eulalie Charland
Roman MacManus
Daniel Oates

Viola
Jenny Coombes
Freya Hicks
Jordan Bergmans
Jenny Wilkinson
Alison D'Souza

Cello
Brian O'Kane
Kirsten Jensen
Sergio Serra
Bryony Moody

Double Bass
Siret Lust
Sophie Roper
Gwen Reed

Piano/Organ
James Orford

Soprano
Bethany Partridge
Ali Hill
Eloise Irving
Katy Hill
Emily Dickens
Miranda Ostler
Rebecca Lea
Rachel Ambrose Evans
Lucy Cronin

Alto
Amy Blythe
Lissie Paul
Guy James
Felicity Turner
Lucy Goddard
Nathan Mercieca

Tenor
Gareth Treseder
Tom Kelly
Rob Jenkins
Will Wright
Will Davies
Tom Robson

Bass
Mike Craddock
Ed Ballard
Edmund Danon
Simon Gallear
Jimmy Holliday
Stuart O'Hara
Owain Park
Richard Savage

Producer: Adrian Peacock

Engineers: Dave Rowell & Dave Hinitt

Recording manager: Amy Hinds

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Piano: Bosendorfer 280 VC-23 Concert Grand

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